

## SPOTLIGHT - Hannah Stoll, Ph.D. student



Hannah Stoll, a Ph.D. student in Plant Breeding and Genetics at the University of Minnesota, is as passionate about teaching as she is about science. Synergizing these interests, she now promotes inclusive science education. Growing up in central Illinois, Hannah first experienced agriculture as a corn pollinator. The drudgery convinced her that she'd never touch corn pollen again. Fate, it seems, is not without a sense of humor. Just a few years later she found herself in a maize genomics lab in college, once again working with corn.

After a bachelor's degree in Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois, Hannah earned an M.S. in Hybrid Wheat Breeding and Genetics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She was now ready to help diversify agricultural landscapes through scientific research and educational outreach on perennial grain crops.

Through her talent for teaching, she's become a vital part of the 'circle of support' movement aimed at diversifying the faces in agriculture. These services are dedicated to inclusive education both in and out of the classroom. One small example is a new partnership between U of MN graduate students and local bakeries in St. Paul, MN. Cookie Cart is a local business providing teens with work, life, and leadership skills through employment and training in urban nonprofit bakeries. Applied Plant Science graduate students are now working with these young people. They talk about how the flour they use to make cookies gets from the field to the bakery, identifying new career opportunities along the way.

Hannah's clarion call for greater inclusivity in agricultural education is well-summarized in a piece she recently authored for the Green Lands Blue Waters Civic Scientist Series<sup>4</sup>.

"Extending the (education) recruitment pipeline would highlight new voices and lead to more diversified leadership in the agriculture industry. A thriving, diverse student body opens the floor to world-changing discussions. My hope for these students is that they will move on to be an innovative cohort of agriculture professionals, leading to actual systemic change in agriculture. I take heart in the future of agriculture as a more equitable environment for people of color and individuals from all backgrounds to thrive."